

The Herald

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War, Ancient and Modern

Could one, on the following considerations, base an opinion worth while as to how long the present world conflict can last? This war is probably unprecedented in history in the number of men engaged. Our civil war song ran, "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong;" and our forbears thought that "a mighty host," as indeed it was. But Germany alone, in area something about one tenth that of our Northern States, has been furnishing at least ten fold those three hundred thousand men, already used up or fighting or in reserve. Napoleon's mightiest army, that which was dissipated in and after Moscow, exceeded somewhat two hundred thousand men; for that number of Frenchmen one must now read in excess of two million. What a handful were Wellington's troops to those English now fighting or in reserve. Italy's forces are computed to exceed at least a million. All these estimates are surely conservative, possibly to the point of error. One reads that up to February 15th last some six million men have been put out of action (killed, wounded or missing—and for missing one can generally read "killed") in the various European spheres of campaigning.

Used up, or fighting, or in reserve! And of what quality are now in large part those reserves? It is the pitifullest thing in this most pitiful of all wars, the pictures one sees of the adolescents—the youths not much more than parted from their mothers' side, that are now in training. Napoleon wanted no recruits under twenty-two. In 1809 he had to take from exhausted France what he could get, and half his army were under twenty; wherefore, all the hospitals his side, of Vienna were packed with his sick, while his lines of march were strewn with his incapacitated. Raglan, in the Crimea, though terribly in need of reinforcements, preferred to wait rather than have "lads" sent him; "the last were so young that they fell victims to disease and were swept away like flies." And, on the other hand, are those pictures of men over forty who have been enrolled or have been ordered to prepare for the call. Bald grey-templed, with pouching under-lids, men with undistributed middles, as the logicians say; men in whom the degenerations are latent and bound to flourish like life-throttling weeds under such conditions as now obtain in European trenches. These men, living temperately and under peace conditions, would probably attain their three score or three score and ten or even

four score. But now how rapidly and how surely must they succumb to their rheumatisms, pneumonias, kidney, heart and liver affections; how long can now their uncertain arteries serve them? How much of an encumbrance rather than a strength are such men likely to be to their commanders? True, nations at war will continue the struggle long after the term of their apparent exhaustion is reached. But, considering the unprecedented extravagance of the human fighting material now obtaining, where is there to be found anywhere any remnant of such material that can last beyond the coming summer?

In the immortal history which Gibbon gave the world in 1781 he wrote: "If we review this general state of the imperial forces; of the cavalry as well as the infantry; of the legions, the auxiliaries, of the guards, of the navy; the most liberal computation will not allow us to fix the entire establishment by sea and by land at more than four hundred and fifty thousand; a military force which, however formidable, was equaled by a monarch of the last century, whose kingdom was confined within a single province of the Roman Empire." Such was the force of an empire which civilization has ever considered the most militant in history, through the many centuries of whose existence its Temple of Janus was but twice closed; such was its force at a time when the mightiest of empires comprised practically all the then known world, from Britain and the Danube's sources south to Ethiopia, from the Western Ocean—the Atlantic—to the Euphrates; an area exceeding one million, six hundred thousand square miles of the most fertile and probably the most populous regions then known. And Gibbon further pregnantly observed regarding the era of Louis XIV: "It must be remembered that France still feels that extraordinary effort." If Gibbon was right, what centuries will it not take all Europe to regain the life and the vitality this cosmic struggle is now costing her.—Scientific American.

Surfeited With Wonders

Three great achievements have just been chalked up to the credit of the wireless. A station on the Illinois shore of Lake Michigan has established communication with both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Wednesday, a wireless telephone message was sent from Washington to Mare Island in San Francisco bay and received, the distance covered being 2,500 miles. The next day, another wireless telephone message carried from Washington to Honolulu, 4,600 miles away.

These achievements make that 1844 demonstration of the Morse telegraphy between Washington and Baltimore a very puny and feeble effort at using God's gifts to his children. Yet Morse startled the world. The news of it roused excitement and caused discussion everywhere. Nations hastened to decorate Morse and his countrymen, who previously had ridiculed him, struggled to do him honor. We accept great

inventions and revolutionary discoveries now as a matter of course. They get a little space in the papers and are promptly forgotten until we wish to use them.

To arouse wonder today you must work in some other field than science.—Toledo Blade.

Our Eastern Advent friends have practically set the time again for the coming of Christ. He is to make appearance at the fall of Constantinople to allied armies and that city is to fall before the snow flies. We are rather inclined to think that their prophets have been looking through crooked glasses and were not in touch with the divine revealer of secrets. Constantinople may or may not fall but it is not written that the Christ will come at that time.

The Carranza Government has been recognized in Mexico which means that Villa's star is fast setting. Mexican affairs have largely dropped out of the public mind since the European war broke out but it will be good news if Mexico settles down to peaceful pursuits once again after her four year's turmoil of war. Peace should be a sweet sounding name to the Mexican people.

Great Army of Coal Miners

A greater number of men were employed in the coal-mining industry in the United States in 1914 than ever before. According to C. E. Leshar, of the United States Geological Survey, the total number of employees in both anthracite and bituminous mines for the first time exceeded three-quarters of a million. This record was made without sacrifice of efficiency, for although the average number of days worked in the bituminous mines was the smallest since 1896, except only 1908, and the average output per man for the year was the lowest in 5 years, the average daily production by each employee in 1914 was the highest on record in bituminous coal mining. This record is to be attributed not so much to the better character of the labor as to improved mining methods and the increased application of scientific management.

The number of men employed in the coal mines of the United States in 1914 was 763,185, of which number 179,679 were engaged in mining anthracite and 583,506 in mining bituminous coal and lignite. The average number of days of employment of each man was 207 for the United States, 195 for bituminous and lignite, and 245 for anthracite. In the bituminous mines the yearly average decreased from 837 tons in 1913 to 724 tons in 1914. The daily average increased from 3.61 to 3.71 tons. The average time made at the anthracite mines in 1914 was exceeded only by the records of 1911 (246 days) and 1913 (257 days.) The average yearly production of anthracite by each employee decreased from 520 short tons in 1913 to 505 tons in 1914, owing to the fewer days worked. The daily output per man was 2.06 tons, a slight gain as compared with 2.02 tons in 1913.

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